1: M Mi Khaing I-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER FOUR

647 BY the time that I was about four years old my father had become
●565 a Subdivisional Officer in the Civil Service, and our family had
joined the ranks of what has now come to be known as the *min-*
177, *kadaw* class, an *a-so-ya min* being a government official and *minkadaw*
65 the wife of a *min*. The minkadaws usually referred to were in the great majority the wives of officials of the Burma Civil Service, Class II, and by the time that we were passing through our childhood and adolescent years they already formed a very definite stratum in Burmese society. We children now comparing notes with the children of the minkadaws posted as far apart as Tavoy and Myitkyina can find common characteristics in all the households, from domestic commodities and meal habits to social conventions and standards of wealth. It is as though a new upper middle class has grown up, complete with snobberies, in what was formerly a classless Burmese society, but a class that still keeps itself quite apart from the European gymkhana life of the district towns.

631 The houses which I can remember, when my father was a Sub-
647 divisional Officer in the subdivisional towns of Zigon and Myanaung
344 where he was in charge of the subdivision, or in the divisional headquarters town of Magwe where the whole hierarchy of min from the Commissioner downwards were present, or in the district headquarters town of Maubin where the min ranked down from the Deputy Commissioner and my father was Headquarters Assistant, all bore certain uniform features. They were all wooden, two-storied and large, with a sufficient number of big rooms to have a dining-room and an office room below, a sitting-room above the portico and two big bedrooms, besides little verandahs and odd rooms. They all had a front staircase for common use and one or two ladder-like staircases behind for watermen, sanitation and servants. The kitchen was about 20 yards away, connected by a covered passage, and at the back of the large garden or compound was the *tanya*, a row of rooms for men servants and Indian
[51] servants. The garden in front was usually modest owing to frequent changes of occupants, but a minimum amount of flowers for daily vases on the altar had always to be cultivated, and fruit trees were prized highly, guava, mango, marian or citron.

692 Unlike most Burmese households we did not have any aunts or
357 other relatives staying with us, but we had our full quota of domestic

592 She was fairly pretty, very quiet and reserved towards us, and enjoyed
357 helping my mother with the babies, supervising the work of the servant girls and valeting my father. Ngwe Yin, who came to us as a very attractive girl with a reputation for being unmanageable even at a young age, always chose the task of taking us for walks in the evenings so that she could put on her nice clothes. She took us wherever she liked, or she sat with us at meal times and let us be as naughty as we wanted while she indulged in repartee with my father's clerks or chauffeur. Mya Shwe was my contemporary and playmate; she went to school while I was in boarding school but cut short her attendances the day I came home, irrespective of differences in our school calendars.

357 When A-Kyi was about nineteen it was announced to us that she
584 was to be married to my father's clerk, Maung Hla Bu. This young man was a favourite of my parents and had been a constant admirer of A-Kyi, helping her to make the beds when my father took the whole family on tours, but awaiting the graciousness of my parents before he dared to ask for her in marriage. My mother gave A-Kyi a small trousseau and a few pieces of jewellery, and they were married shortly before my father got a posting to another station. When a child was born, Mya Shwe, who had outgrown her days as a playmate for me, went to stay with them. Ngwe Yin, the beautiful girl, continued discontentedly for about a year, and then she eloped with a student protégé of my father's. I don't think either of my parents were very shocked at this.

357 My memories of the girls who worked for us are happy enough only
565 because my mother had been brought up in Grandfather's house where everyone was taught to do things for herself; in her character also was a pervading sense of tolerance. In some minkadaws' houses, however, I have seen two girls kneeling with soap and towel outstretched, while the mistress bathed herself. In more cheerful but no less aristocratic-minded households a meal laid ready on the table is the signal for one girl to get under the table and fan the mosquitoes off the legs of the family, and another to play the gramophone right through the meal My gay young uncle San Lin extended the domestic duties of his girls to the learning of modern songs which he liked, and he did his morning dressing to the accompaniment of his servant girls with powder on their faces and jasmine buds in their hair, swinging their feather brooms to the rhythm of modern love songs.

592 A-Kyi and A-Shwe and all the girls we had before and after them
431 bring back memories of the household articles which made with them a
513 background never recovered in our later Rangoon days. My mother,
286 like all minkadaws in the districts, did not depend on a big bazaar and
511

779 881 792 It is this renunciation[1] which we symbolize in the shinbyu ceremony when a boy leaves his home and lives in the order. A parent who fails to hold the ceremony or get his son initiated in some other way fails in his first duty towards his son, and those who hold a shinbyu for orphans or the sons of the poor achieve great merit.

To provide a background symbolic of Prince Siddhartha's circumstances, parents spend as much as they can afford; a flagged pavilion is put up before the house, a multitude of people are invited for feasting, the boy is dressed in princely garments and jewels, and rides around the town on a white horse, with a procession following. For him to return and wash the powder off his face, to doff the turban and show the newly shaven head, to change the glittering clothes of silk for a plain yellow [292] robe showing golden on the bare brown skin,—this is moving indeed. And when he comes back the next day in procession with other monks, his eyes cast down and his bowl before him, his mother makes obeisance to him for the first time, not as her son now but as one of the priestly order, a hpongyi, a "great glory". That must be a moment of spiritual plenitude in a mother's life.

881 792 I do not remember much about my brother's shinbyu, but I remember the beauty of his face as he came back in procession on that first day. A good face has its nobility enhanced by the complete absence of such adornment, even as is provided by the frame of hair or the line of neck clothing; it has to stand alone. I am often struck with the beautiful calm faces of some older monks. There is a look of repose which they wear easily after years of daily meditation and freedom from petty irritations and personal relationships, and a glow to the brown skin which is the result of years spent in clean and open surroundings, with sufficient to eat, and regularity of hours; the strongly marked eyebrows giving a nobility to the face when the head has been shorn. The unconscious reflection of this look on the face of a small boy touches us profoundly; there is a sweet solemnity on the young shaven face; the most mischievous boys become awed and chastened without any prompting.

881 792 ●565 [563] In recent years, we have had a full dress shinbyu in the family for my husband's nephew, Sao Sai Long, who as the heir to the Shan State of Kengtung was initiated into the priesthood with the full panoply due to Buddhist royalty. A long wide bamboo pavilion was set up, beginning with a high shelf for the offerings to all the monasteries in the town, the next platform for the monks who were to receive Sao Sai Long into their monastery, the next lower for the attendant boys who were also to be initiated, and for the *palin* (the jewelled *chaise longue* on which Sao Sai Long was to recline), the next for the family, and successively lower ones for the various grades of the people. (The

[1 e.g., The Great Renunciation of Prince Siddhartha--Analyst]

European officials and friends were given chairs in deference to their stiffer joints, but the chairs which eventually raised them higher than the family were placed on a side platform which had been cleverly made two inches lower than the family's platform.) On the day of the actual initiation, tall vases on the high shelf held robes, fans and slippers as offerings to the monks, and rupee coins put into long net cylinders to get around the rule that monks should not touch money. Sitting against this were a row of monks with eyes downcast, below and before them were the *shinlaungs*, sixteen little attendant boys all powdered white with silk clothes and golden chains around their necks. On the couch sat Sao Sai Long, Sao Thiri Raza, his face unpowdered but glowing with the beauty of his race, his clothes of finest silk and gold, on his head a jewelled crown sitting proudly above his young face.

Three days in succession before the actual initiation day he sat like this in front of the assembled people, and when the drums took up the strange sad music which is traditionally played for the departure of a king, he stepped into a throne-seat that was lifted high on an elephant to go in procession round the town. The music and the splendour of Buddhist kingship in these days of government officials stirred the unrealized, half forgotten roots in our breasts; it made us feel things we had known in some other world and brought tears to our eyes. Sao Sai Long, my nephew aged 14, who had just returned from a year at King's School, Canterbury, who had never given me a moment's peace with his affectionate and irreverent ways, and who is even now riding wildly round an Australian sheep farm, felt and looked a dignity which he has never achieved before or since, as he was lifted high on an elephant and rode around his beautiful old city with its big trees and mountains, with spears, banners, white and gold umbrellas before him, a king for the last time in full pomp. He must have felt like Tamurlaine:

Oh, 'tis passing fair to be a king,
And ride in triumph through Persepolis.

Officer have appeared as higher sources of authority which are present not far away, and the village headman has lost much of his standing as elder person responsible for law and order, retaining chiefly his position as tax-collector. This is to the loss of village administration.

As a-so-ya mins, men like my father had more power and prestige than they had money. The salary of a B.C.S. II Officer, which ranged from Rs. 300/- to Rs. 900/-, was enough to ensure easy living and a certain amount of saving for old age, but in the place of the expensive carpets, glass, silver, uniformed servants and tinned foods which we saw in English officials' houses, they had to spend what might seem to foreigners a disproportionate amount on two items: jewellery for the women and financial help to relatives. Jewellery is not a vanity for a Burmese woman but an article of dress, worn both day and night, in varying degrees according to whether she is working or out on pleasure. The word for jewellery does not include any description of gems, but is *let-wut let-sa*: wear for the arms and such. When servant girls enter a household the humblest of them is given a gold chain to hang around her neck or a bangle for her wrist. Thus among the classes who have any money to spare beyond that for mere sustenance, from the more affluent cultivators, the small traders and shopkeepers and clerks, to "rich" land-owners, mill-owners and government officials, a great amount of money is spent on jewellery. Not to have any would be an unbearable shame.

A complete set of jewellery for a well-dressed woman comprises the following articles, all worn together when attending shinbyus, ear-boring and marriage ceremonies, official functions and numerous other occasions. For the hair a *sado*, a hairpin with a single large diamond on the end; a comb with teeth of gold and a row of diamonds set closely along the back of the rim; a *sein-pan gaing*, a gold hairpin with a cluster of flowers to hang and dangle, set with diamonds. These articles have the gold parts embedded in the knot of hair and only show the diamonds. Round the neck are worn the *lè-gat*, a narrow gold collar set widely with diamonds, fitting like a vice; below this a double row of small pearls tied tightly behind with red tassels; the *lè-ton* "trembling necklace"—a "choker" necklace—sitting so that little chains set with diamonds hang from it all round the neck and tremble; a chain with a diamond locket below this. In the ears are worn single diamond studs. On the jacket five diamond buttons, attached to gold rings set with diamonds, fasten the button loops. On the wrists and hands diamond bracelets and as many rings as possessed, of rubies, emeralds and sapphires set with diamonds are worn. A young girl also wears hollow anklets of gold round her ankles. In addition to the above, the richer minkadaws and wives of big traders possess corresponding pieces of rubies, emeralds and

never talked about the business of their past working days when they met. Sometimes they showed a fleeting interest in news of the postings of friends still in service, but even the official matters of Thaton district itself did not enter into their discussions. They talked of charity donations, of the respective monasteries which they endowed and attended, and of formulæ of *eggaya-hto*, alchemy, or the search for the philosopher's stone which will turn all metals to gold. Most Burmans get interested in eggaya-hto during their later years, even if few now practise it.

This alchemy, which has no place among the true teachings of Buddhism, has to be done under auspicious astrological influences and is usually carried on in secret. Burman Buddhists condemn the use of it when it is carried on for *lawba*, greed for riches, but others justify the process as a means of concentrating the mental faculties. The common stories tell of hermits in the forests, who by their ascetic life and concentrated meditation have more powers over the forces of nature, as being well versed in the processes of alchemy. When such a hermit achieves the extreme concentration of mind on his task he is successful—the philosopher's stone is discovered, the body of the hermit then disappears in the dissolving of matter, and his spirit is free to live unhampered by the body, till the arrival of the next Buddha on the earth. Most Burmese women, however, although they believe that this happens in the case of hermits, object very strongly to the practice of alchemy on the part of their menfolk, owing to the money and energy that is wasted on seeking out new and expensive formulæ once the craze has got hold of a man. All experiments are started with mercury which is melted with other minerals, animal or vegetable substances which derive their magical properties partly from their inaccessibility, partly from being treated with prescribed rites. My father had no intention of taking up alchemy and impoverishing us, but he too was very interested to hear of the success and failure of various methods. These discussions must have been kept well anchored to reality by the other chief topic of discussion—the families of the pensioners.

The five duties of a parent towards his children include the settling of the child in a good marriage. By the time the a-so-ya mins retire, their sons and daughters have reached a marriageable age. The sons are in the process of winning a good position in one of the government services and their daughters have been dressed with an adequate amount of jewellery. The marriage market, which had no existence in former Burmese society and which still is unheard of in Ye, and among the poorer people, is now a very concrete institution among the educated and modern classes. The rise of the minkadaw class and of higher paid Class I government officials has been mainly responsible for this. More

593 and more within recent years, the higher government services have come
584 to be associated not only with "face", but with *gon*, prestige, and *ausa*,
554 authority, which together make up a *myet-hna-gyi*, big face, in Burma.
177 Mothers of daughters want their daughters to have gon and ausa and be
58 big of face as the wife of the senior government officer in a town, and
•565 mothers of sons want to get the most for themselves and their other children out of having such a golden goose. They want a girl with wealth, a meek nature, good looks, religious piety and education, more or less in this order. So that the imperfect daughter-in-law may lack the last named qualities rather than the first. Wealth means not merely money, property or jewels, but an absence of younger brothers and sisters or other potential dependents, this being a very important factor in our closely-knit family system. A relative of mine who had just seen his son enter a top service, showed my father his comprehensive table of the marriageable girls of Burma, under headings of family connections, amount and form of property, potential dependents, physical and moral qualities of the girl. My father should have been keenly interested as the father of a son who was studying in England with success, and, indeed, when my brother returned, he might have fetched us about Rs. 30,000 had he desired, so far have we progressed beyond the Burmese traditions of the man's family asking for the hand of the girl with presents of money and jewellery.

It may be asked, what of the men who are thus bartered? Burmans are very greatly attached to their mothers; few can resist a mother's tears, and the tears in these cases are genuinely of grief, because the mother sees this marriage as a faithful discharge of one of her five duties. The five duties of a child towards its parent, on the other hand, include the support of father and mother, and in making this marriage the man sees the best way of providing comfort to his parents in their old age. For the girls also, an arranged marriage is not necessarily a joyless thing. Girls who are educated as we have been, in spite of reading Western romances, are brought up to believe that a girl will grow to love her husband who is good to her. *Tha-na*, pity, compassion, and *chit*, affection-love, are very close in Burmese; the usual way for a wife to address her husband is *Maung*, the same word as younger brother, or *Ko Ko*, elder brother; some husbands address their wives as *nyi-ma-lay*, little sister. And, in fact, in most cases the results do bear out the wisdom of this attitude towards marriage; so that to most Burmans it is the "free" Western marriages which so often appear ill-assorted and lead to divorces. Still, it cannot be denied that much undignified haggling and manœuvring go on nowadays, in the efforts to obtain the best match for sons and daughters. *Aung-thwès*, go-betweens, get a lot of

441 563 semi-precious stones, or gold dust, all cut with many tiny facets. We once had in our house a heavy glass vase, imported by an English firm, of a dull bluish-black colour. One day a wind mercifully blew the vase on to the floor where it broke into a hundred pieces. My cousin gathered up the pieces and the next time she went to Mandalay her button cutter fashioned them into several sets of round sparkling buttons catching the light and showing now black, now grey, now blue, one set of which I wear to this day. These and the velvet slippers which are universally worn were sold in the market by young Burmese women sitting opposite the tha-yet-htè longyi sellers. The slippers also came from Mandalay, and in the days of the last Burmese king, the common people were forbidden to wear them; they were reserved for royal use alone.

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265 563 At last my sisters considered that I was suitably dressed as the elder sister of such fashionable young ladies as they had now grown into, and equipped to attend any social function of the town. Although Burmese people love gathering to eat and drink, hotels and restaurants did not exist in Rangoon society. Both the Western restaurants where people danced and drank alcoholic drinks, and the leading Chinese restaurants where the dolled-up Chinese waitresses served the male customers with playful attentions, were out of bounds for Burmese women, and therefore not greatly frequented by Burmese men either, except in the case of the Chinese hotels as a carousal. Night bazaars were, however, eminently respectable, all Rangoon families being addicted to the habit of eating out as a supper after their dinner at home. They drove in cars to the pavement stalls of Chinatown, Moghul Street and Yegyaw; at Burmese stalls they got out and squatted on the benches provided, while the seller served them from the cooking pot beside her; at Indian and Chinese shops they had a plank thrust through to rest on the doors of the car, and ate sitting there. After eating rich Mohammedan food or delicious Chinese dishes, they drove a few streets further on to eat in the same fashion at an ice-cream or sherbet stall. It was a good life indeed.

546 177. 54 We usually did this after the cinema. While we went to see American films, my mother and her friends invariably went to a Burmese film. There were four Burmese cinema halls in Rangoon, whose box offices were always besieged, but in spite of this the cinema industry in Burma was not a thriving one. Actors and actresses were poor and suffered a social stigma. About twenty-five feature films were produced in Rangoon each year, both sound and silent, by companies whose prosperity never lasted more than a few years. They could often be seen filming their outdoor scenes round the Royal Lakes, the University Estate and the fields around Mingaladon, using studios only for indoor scenes. In pite of this, the effects aimed at were ambitious, especially in the earlier

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882 304 and reminiscences of other ceremonies of the kind that they have witnessed. Usually the gold needle is bent round and left in the wound, but poor people sometimes pass a piece of string through and tie it. This is turned round and passed backwards and forwards daily till the sides heal, and then begins the process of enlarging the hole to receive the na-daung, a big tube an inch long and from half an inch to three-quarters in diameter. This takes a very long time, and is less pleasant even than the first boring. Some do it with a gold or thickly gilt metal plate, which is rolled up and passed through the hole. The elasticity of the metal makes it constantly tend to expand, and so the hole is gradually enlarged. A commoner method, however, is by introducing stems of the kaing, or elephant grass. As many of the little stems of the inner blade as will go through are passed in, and daily their number is added to until a considerable width is attained. When kaing grass is not available, little splints of the thekkè kyaung are made use of. This is the ordinary thatch of the poorer sort of houses, and almost universal in the country districts, but forbidden in the large towns on account of its inflammable character. Then, after a time, the nā-kat is brought into use. This is a curious ear-plug, big at both ends, and smaller in the middle, where the two parts screw into one another. The screw is passed through the lobe of the ear, and the other portion is then twisted on. These nā-kat are gradually increased in size, until at last the orifices are large enough to receive the na-daung, the regular ear-cylinders. These are of various make and material, the latter being formerly regulated by the sumptuary laws in independent territory. The royal family, both males and females, had them of gold, richly set with jewels, often a single large brilliant in front, or a diamond surrounded by a ring of emeralds, while the back was a cluster of rubies. The right to wear these was also extended to the higher ministers and their families. Others wear gold, plain hollow tubes, or with the ends filled up with delicate *repoussé* work. Those who cannot afford this content themselves with solid amber plugs, which, when they are without a flaw, are worth three or four pounds sterling apiece. Finally, the poor content themselves with

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hollow pipes of glass, coloured in a variety of tints. The shape is somewhat peculiar, a slight irregular concave, if I may be allowed the expression, the front being a little larger in diameter than the back. Some of the princesses wore very costly na-daung, the diamonds, and especially the rubies, for which Burma is celebrated, being exceedingly fine. The men, except those of high rank, very seldom wear them, unless on exceptional feast days. Women ordinarily put them on whenever they go out. Poor people keep the holes open with a roll of paper or cloth. A *chic* damsel very often courts attention by carrying spare cherpots dangling from her lobes. Elder women who subordinate personal appearance to bodily comforts usually do the same thing on a journey. It secures them a smoke whenever they may want it, and the huge green cheroots are not easily carried in the penetralia of the Burmese female dress, while if they were in the travelling box, they might be abstracted by unscrupulous youngsters.

It is curious to notice how much the custom is falling into disuse in the larger towns with the men. Even among the wealthier classes you seldom see a man wearing a na-daung of the largest size. Those of the thickness of a pencil or a little less are still common, but they too probably will pass out of use shortly. Yet this used to be looked upon as the distinctive mark of Burmese nationality. Probably, nowadays, the tattooing is considered sufficient; while the ear-plugs were certainly inconvenient things, and afforded obvious attractions to robbers. But with the women ear-boring is still universal, and probably will continue so as long as the men go on tattooing, notwithstanding the pain of the process. The na-daung are as characteristic of the Burmese women as the flapping tamein.

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It rounds a girl's mouth a good deal when she puts it in. In the manufacture of it chopped tobacco leaves and pieces of the stem of the tobacco plant and the pith of the oh'nè, a species of Euphorbia, are the chief ingredients. Very often these are boiled with palm-sugar and allowed to dry before making up. The cover is made of the leaf of the teak-tree, or of a tree called the thanat, the ends being tucked in at the point. A piece of red raw silk fastens it at the end put in the mouth, and some broader pieces of pith are put there to give it stiffness to the lips. The finer kinds, such as were only used in Upper Burma in the palace, are rolled up in the thin white inner coating of the bark of the betel-tree. The cheroot has an ash like a cinder, and usually burns holes in the clothes of an Englishman the first time he tries it. Laid down thoughtlessly on an oily mat, it is a fruitful cause of fires. All Burman ladies are adepts at rolling cheroots, and a dozen or two of them form a common present to favoured swains.

Chewing betel is sometimes carried on simultaneously with smoking, but most people prefer to economise enjoyment, and only chew in the interval between smokes. Chewing is hardly an exact expression, and the use of it frequently leads the experimenting Briton into the unpleasant predicament of having all the interstices between his teeth choked up with little fragments of the nut, which, with their indescribable aromatic flavour, stimulate the flow of saliva for hours afterwards. The Burman splits his nut in half, smears a little slaked lime, usually white, but sometimes tinted pink or salmon coloured, on the betel vine leaf, puts in a little morsel of cutch and tobacco, and then rolls it up and stows away the quid in the side of his mouth, occasionally *squeezing* it a little between his teeth. It is as well to be very cautious with the lime and cutch (the juice of the *Acacia catechu*) the first time you make a trial. The latter especially is very astringent. One variety of the nut, called the Taunggu betel, has effects very much resembling intoxication. Chewing kôn-thi is an unlovely practice. The Burman has none of the delicacy with regard to a spittoon which characterises the American, and these articles require to be of a very considerable size. The monks are perhaps

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CHAPTER IX

THE HOUSE AND ITS BELONGINGS

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It is singular that in a country where the pagodas and temples will compare in stately grandeur and symmetry of form with the sacred edifices of any part of the world, and where the monastic buildings, though only constructed of wood, strike the most casual observer with their shapely beauty and wealth of decoration; it is singular where there is a taste for such edifices and abundance of the architectural skill necessary to erect them, that the Burman should in the vast majority of cases live in the flimsiest of bamboo huts. The original cause may be found perhaps in the stringent regulations of the Yāzagaing. In native Burma the shape of a man's house was fixed for him by law according to his station in life. All were one-storeyed, save where exceptional royal favour had granted the spire-like roof to a distinguished noble or a feudatory chief. Brick houses were forbidden, from the apprehension that the inhabitants might take it into their heads to turn them into fortifications. Gilding was forbidden to all subjects, and permission to lacquer and paint the pillars of their houses granted to but a very few, and it was expressly laid down that no one should have an arch over his door. This may account for the paltry and even wretched appearance of most villages, but it is undeniable that though nowadays, they are very considerably more substantial, yet a rich man never by any chance thinks of building himself a grand house, and remains firmly by the unpretentious model of his ancestors. This is the more curious, because they will spare no expense to buy gay turbans and bright-coloured pasos for themselves, and costly

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517 silks for their wives. The ordinary explanation is that every one can see what clothes you wear, while few people care to come and spy out what kind of a house you live in, and how you fare. But there can be very little doubt that the real reason is a survival of the idea of the old Yāzagaing, as well as the fact that long years of custom have impressed upon everybody the opinion that there are only two forms of architecture, the secular and the ecclesiastical, and no one, no matter how sure he might be that the Government would take no notice of his ambition, would brave the denunciations of the religious by adding a spire to his house, or even adorning the gable ends with carved pinnacles and flamboyant finials of the monasteries. Consequently the one regular form prevails everywhere.

342 576 The Burman's dwelling, then, is always shaped more or less like a marquee tent, and never more than one storey high, to avoid the humiliating possibility of the feet of some one being over your head. But the whole house stands on posts, so that the floor is seven or eight feet from the ground. It consists often of only one room, usually, however, of two or more, and to the front of the house there is always a verandah, three or four feet lower than the general level of the house, and as often as not quite open to the street, or the garden, or whatever may be in front and always to the sky. [551] The posts which form the main or central part of the house are usually six in number, and all have their names, such as 353 776 Uyu, Kya-hngan, Nyaung-yan. The south post, in the main part of the house, the Thabye-taing, is the best known, as being always adorned with leaves and particularly marked as that in the top of which most probably lives the nat-spirit of the house. [764] A dead body, after being swathed, and while waiting for the coffin, is always placed by it.

341 787 A house ought never to be built till the foundations have been thoroughly dug up and shown to a soothsayer. He will determine, from the substances found, whether it is a lucky place to build a house in or not. It stands to reason that the building cannot be commenced till a lucky day and hour have been sought out. There is considerable care to be observed in the selection of the timber. Posts are masculine, feminine, and neuter. Male posts are of equal size at both

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ends; females are larger at the base; those which swell out in the middle are a-thet ma-shi—without life; taing bilu, ogre's posts are largest at the top. As a general rule it may be taken for granted that if a house is built with neuter posts, its inmates will always be miserable and unlucky; if the posts are ogres, death and disaster will attend; male posts are easy-going and harmless; females, on the contrary, are fortunate and leading to honour. But it may happen that the character of the piece of ground on which the house is built upsets all these generalisations, so that it is necessary to get a wise man's opinion before you get your posts. The Deittôn gives many instructions on the subject, and among other things mentions how a man's fortune may be calculated from the Hle-ga-tit, the side pieces of the steps which lead up to the verandah. The presence or absence of knots, and if the former, their position, determines the luck of the householder.

Poor people use bamboo instead of wood, and make their walls of mats, woven of the same substance, split up. Occasionally, however, they rise to the dignity of common jungle timber. Richer people make use of the invaluable teak, or of pyinkado (*Xylia dolabriformis*), a wood almost as durable, and equally expensive. White ants will attack neither of these. The walls of such houses are planked. The roof is sometimes composed of small flat tiles, but more commonly of thatch. This consists in most places in the Delta of dani, the leaves of the toddy palm, which are first soaked in salt water, a precaution which prevents insects from destroying them. Up country a species of grass called thekkè is universally used. This style of roofing is very satisfactory in every respect but one. It is cheap, easily put on, reasonably water-tight, but very inflammable, and consequently is not allowed in any of the larger towns in the Province. In the smaller stations, however, it is almost universal, and the consequence is that when one house takes fire, the sparks from it kindle all the others, as a matter of course. Consequently, as an imperative measure of protection, every house is provided with a long hooked bamboo, called a mi-cheit, by means of which to pull off all the thatch as soon as a fire breaks out in the neighbourhood, and in

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342 addition to this a mi-kat stands beside it. This is a broad
731 griddle, or flapper kind of thing, and its object is to beat out
355 the flame which may be caused by a spark lighting on the roof. In addition to this, in many parts of the country, pots full of water are always kept in readiness on the tops of the houses, so that when the hour of danger comes, the householder may douse his roof, and so do the best for him-
[368] self. In Mandalay, under native rule, some of the pa-gwets, and other outcasts, patrolled the streets all night, to watch for and prevent fires as much as possible.

342 Another kind of roofing is wā-kat, a sort of flat tile-like construction, six feet long by two feet broad, made of coarse bamboo matting. Bamboos split in half down the centre, and with the knots smoothed away, are also used. They are placed close together, with the hollow side upwards, extending all the way down from the ridge to the eaves, and over these again are placed others with the rounded side up, the whole presenting rather a curious appearance, but making a very serviceable roof and not nearly so dangerous as the leaf or grass thatching. The leaves of other trees are also occasionally used, but the simplicity and cheapness of the dani roof make it by far the most prevalent in the delta, as grass is elsewhere, notwithstanding its danger. In Rangoon and Maulmein, shingles, that is, small wooden slabs like slates, are being very generally introduced.

In the better class of houses the floors are made of
● [565] planking, but poorer people have nothing better than a series of whole or split bamboos laid side by side on the cross-beams and tied down with rattans. This is not very pleasant to walk on, and has the further disadvantage of being anything but cleanly, for the spaces between the bamboos offer an irresistible temptation to drop all litter and garbage on to the ground immediately underneath the house, and were it not for the pariah dogs the sanitary condition of the place would soon be very bad.

352 The house is thus simple enough in its character, but
177.35 the furniture is still more so. Intercourse with the English
369 has indeed brought many Burmans to indulge in English luxuries, and in many houses in Rangoon and the larger district towns, chandeliers, bookcases, pictures, and even

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CHAPTER XLIII

SUMPTUARY LAWS AND ETIQUETTE[1]

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UNDER native rule the sumptuary laws in Mandalay were exceedingly strict and most elaborate in their character. Out of the capital the regulations were equally in force, but never, as a matter of fact, came into action, because the country governors took very good care to replenish their coffers out of the money-bags of every one who chanced to be fortunate in his speculations. Speaking generally, officials were the only rich people; but in no country in the world was the official rank more open to competition, or more subject to the caprice of the king. The last mayor of Mandalay, who was also Governor of the Rafts—that is to say, Lord High Admiral—was not many years before little better than a slave, and owed his first start in life to a lucky accident. Several others of King Thibaw's most prominent advisers were among his personal attendants before he ascended the throne. There is, therefore, nothing of the caste prejudice of the Hindoos to be found in Burma. Burmans will often declare there is caste, but what is called by that name is nothing more than the arbitrary settlement by the sumptuary laws of what a man might wear and what was forbidden; what language he may use and what must be used to him. Captain Forbes, in his book on Burma, said that these prohibitions extended in native territory to the names which might be given to a man. The term Shwe, meaning gold, was, he said, restricted as a name to people of rank. This is certainly a misappre-

[1] Since the annexation of Upper Burma these sumptuary rules are no longer law, but they are observed by very many good citizens even under British rule.

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hension. It may have been an ancient law, but it was not enforced in the last years of the Burmese empire, and it does not seem to have been enforced even in the times of the haughtiest and most unreasonable monarchs, such as Tharrawaddy and Mintaya Gyi. The appellative was perhaps not so common as in British territory; but as far as the law was concerned, the poor man might call himself and his children Shwe as much as he pleased; only he had to be very careful how he used any of the gold he might possess in decorating his person or in adorning his house.

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If the regulations did not apply to the name a man might have, they certainly did to the language he might make use of. Oriental forms of speech in self-depreciation are familiar enough. They are universal with all the nations of the East, and even turn up in the democratic West in the petitions of "your humble, obedient servant." The magniloquent and supreme nga, as applied to one's self, is not peculiar to Burma; while hnin, addressed to an inferior, is only a little more contemptuous than the *Er* of the small German courts. The difference between the various ranks is far more distinctly marked than this in the employment of different forms of speech; an entirely special language as applied to the royal blood, and in a scarcely less adulatory way to the members of the Assembly of the Perfect. A man "dies"; a monk "goes back" to the blissful seats whence he came, or to ne'ban; a king "ascends to the village of Nats"; one of the six heavens of happiness, where the passions still reign, and in the contemplation of which Buddhists find consolation for the otherwise dismal forebodings of their faith. The Buddhist religion is thoroughly democratic. A man only is what he is through his actions in past existences. The accumulation of merits must therefore vastly outweigh the demerits in the kan of a king. However badly he may act in his regal existence, he cannot fall below the lowest seat of the dewas—at least, so official language declares. Similarly, an ordinary man "walks"; a mendicant "stalks," or "strides," or "paces with dignified gait," or whatever may be the English honorific equivalent of the Burmese chwa; while a king "makes a royal progress." The latter expression was emphatically correct as

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far as personages of the Burmese royal blood were concerned. The descendants of Mahā Thamada never went on their own legs in the open air. If they did not mount an elephant, some official was honoured with the weight of majesty on his back. In the same way, while a humble subject "eats," a pôngyi sônpônpethi "assimilates," or "nourishes his body with the alms of the pious"; and a king demeans himself to nothing less than "ascending to the lordly board." You may "call" or "invite" an ordinary man; to an ascetic you may "suggest an interview"; you would be a reckless man indeed if you sought a formula which in the faintest imaginable way would suggest to a king that you wanted him to come to you. When your visitor departs, if he is on familiar terms, he says, Thwa-mi nŏ, "I say, I'm going," and you politely respond, Thwa-ba, "By all means, go away"; if he stands a little in awe of you, he says, Thwa-daw-mi, "Honoured sir, I take my leave"; on the other hand, when, after a conference with a holy brother, you take your departure, you say, "My lord's servant does obeisance" (literally, "kowtows with his forehead"). When there was a king he did not give you the chance to say anything; he flung out of the throne and disappeared behind a blue curtain, while your eyes were fixed on the ground a couple of feet before you.

And so it goes on through a triple language, which makes Burmese of the palace an unknown tongue to the best foreign scholar. Tales are told of the ludicrous mistakes of men, who to ordinary people could speak Burmese, and therefore imagined they might venture on it with the king. Thus it was with a bluff English manager of one of the numerous mills which King Mindôn built and kept going till he got tired of them. This gentleman, in replying in the affirmative to some remark of the Lord of the Golden Palace, horrified the court by saying hôkde instead of the prescribed tin-ba payah, "I think with your majesty." The expression to palace ears was much the same as if some one were to say to His Majesty the King of England, "Right you are, old cockie." The court language is still kept up by all Burmese in their intercourse with superior officials.

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If the proprieties of language were carefully observed, the regulations as to wearing apparel and ornaments were

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far more minute, and guarded with the most jealous care. The almost wretched character of the houses of Upper Burma, as compared with those in the lower territory, was very apparent; but what struck a stranger even more was the absence of the gay dress which is so pleasant and picturesque in Pegu and the seaboard provinces. There was indeed no law against any one wearing the most brilliant paso he could get; but the money was wanting to support the character. A man with a fine waistcloth would be considered to have the money at the back of it, and might have to sell his dress to meet the contributions demanded accordingly by the local official. In Lower Burma, every one has a feast-day dress, however poor he may be. He gets the money for it by a week's work, perhaps backed up by a lucky bit of gambling. Then he is at liberty to strut about and do nothing till the clothes get shabby, when he has to bestir himself again. In British territory, too, he might decorate his kilt with any number of representations of the peacock. An Upper Burman would have been promptly put in gaol—he would even have run some risk of being killed outright—if he ventured upon one. Peacocks were for personages of the blood-royal. Most people in independent territory wore no coats at all; but if they did wear coats, they had to be of the simplest possible "Chinese cut." Long-tailed taingmatheins, surcoats and the like, were reserved for officials, with regulations as to buttons, gold or otherwise, and other minutiæ which must have severely taxed the memory of informers and chamberlains.

As we ascend in the social, or rather the official scale,—for all dignity came from office, or from a special patent from the king—distinctions thickened. Naturally in the land of the umbrella-bearing chiefs, the huge htis afforded a prominent and obvious mode of marking rank. The umbrella is twelve or fifteen high, with an expanse of six feet or more across. A poor man had nothing to do with these big umbrellas whatever, unless he were employed to carry one over his master's head. If he owned an umbrella at all, it had to be short in the handle and otherwise of Western limensions. Royal officials about the palace had their mbrellas painted black inside; country people, and those

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565 301 not directly connected with the royal abode, had the palm-leaf as near the original colour as the varnishing with wood-oil permitted. Some had permission to cover the wide surface with pink or green satin; others, more honoured, might add a fringe, either plain or embroidered. A golden umbrella was given by special grace to the highest wuns and the royal princes. A white umbrella belonged to the king alone and to religion, and not even the Eingshemin, the heir-apparent, when such a person existed, was allowed to use it. Matters were still further complicated by the number of umbrellas. Nine white ones marked the king; the Eingshemin had eight golden ones; and the rest of the royal personages numbers corresponding to their achievements, or the regard the king had for them. If they achieved too much, however, and became popular, they died. Distinguished statesmen and generals might have several gold htis, which were duly displayed on all public occasions, and were put up in the house in prominent places. The king's "agent" in Rangoon had only one, which very fairly represented the consideration in which Great Britain was held, and the official rank thought good enough to communicate with the Chief Commissioner. A favourite trick 565 291 301 of the king, Naungdaw Gyi, was to issue perpetually new edicts as to the length of umbrella handles and the proper measurement of the paso. District officials used to make [661] large sums of money in the way of fines in those days, and occasionally themselves fell victims. There was nothing of the kind latterly, unless we may consider the queen Supayalat's announcement as to the way in which her hair was dressed, being patented as her sole prerogative, an instance of the same nature. Nevertheless, the general distinctions were very tenaciously held by. Innocent, unwitting Englishmen got themselves into serious trouble in Mandalay by going about carrying silk umbrellas with white covers. The offence was high treason and merited death. None actually underwent the supreme penalty, but there were a few who had vivid denunciations for the stocks.

565 The metal, size, and construction of spittoons, betel-boxes, cups, and the like household furniture for different grades were rigidly demarcated, and afforded the most

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minute evidences of the owner's rank and his precedence in that rank. Anklets of gold (kyegyin) were forbidden to all children but those of the royal family on pain of death. Silk cloth, brocaded with gold or silver flowers and figures of animals, might be worn by none but the royal blood and such of the wunkadaws, the minister's wives, as received a special grace enabling them to use it. Similarly the usage as to jewels and precious stones was very carefully laid down. Very few besides the king and his kinsfolk might wear diamonds. The display of emeralds and rubies was restricted in like manner, and so on with other precious stones less esteemed by Burmans. All rubies above a certain size found in the country were the property of the king, and the hapless digger as a rule got nothing in return. His head paid the penalty if he listened to the temptings of black merchants from India, and chipped it so as to bring it under the royalty size. Kadipa panat, velvet sandals, were allowed to none but persons of royal blood. The use of hinthapada, a vermilion dye obtained from cinnabar, was very jealously guarded. The kamauk, a great wide-brimmed hat, was an honour eagerly sought after by the lower rank of officials. The institution was not very ancient, and was primarily due to a prophecy that Burma would come to be ruled by a hat-wearing people. To cut out the Englishmen, therefore, the kamauk was invented, and was looked upon as a great distinction. Hundreds more instances might be given of the yazagaing, the sumptuary rules; but the above will probably suffice to exhibit their scope and character.

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Our present Burmese subjects delight in nothing so much as in their immunity from these enactments; and perhaps the permission to bury their dead in any way they please is the most popular privilege. In Mandalay, exclusive of the ceremonial at the cremation of a monk, which is identical all over the country, five kinds of funeral were ordained by the yazagaing. First, that of the king; then of any member of the royal family. Even if one of them were executed, he was put in a red velvet bag and committed to the waters of the Irrawaddy. Third in order were the funerals of those who died in the enjoyment of ministerial office—not always a certain thing, if the recipient did not

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die shortly after his promotion. Then came the obsequies of thutés, "rich men," people who had royal edicts conferring that title on them; and finally the rites of poor people, which were practically no rites at all. They probably would not even have been buried were it not for sanitary reasons. But now in all Burma the poorest man, if he can borrow the money, may have any honours he pleases for his dead. He may shade the catafalque with golden umbrellas, or white ones for the matter of that; he may hire elephants; he may fire guns, as long as he does not do it in the public thoroughfares; he may have any number of bands of music; he may erect a pagoda over the ashes of the deceased; he may revel in all the honours restricted by the yazagaing to the most privileged dead; and, in consequence, he may suffer in pocket as much as he dares. Further, he may heap up honorifics in his conversation and correspondence to the utmost of his desire and capability; finding infinite gratification in the fact that in former days the use of a single one of them would most assuredly have resulted in his being lodged in gaol, there to be treated according to the way in which he was able to satisfy the rapacity of his guardians. If yazagaing was unpleasant when it was in operation, the contemplation of it certainly affords an unfailing pleasure to those who are exempt from its provisions.

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the guard dispersed the people. Next day, an old lady, who claimed to be the owner of the dog, visited the big Englishman and told him she forgave him. He was barely polite.

Burmans had no trouble with the pigs and dogs. They found their own countrymen much more awkward to meet. There was constantly some prince or mingyi passing along the streets, and then the road had to be immediately cleared, and every one knelt humbly till the great man passed. Any delay in clearing the path, or an imagined want of reverence in the shikhoing, met with very summary punishment. Before every dignitary rushed along a posse of half-naked lictors, yelling out to the people to bow down, and hitting round about them with their fasces and dahs. These masterful ruffians particularly loved to insult Englishmen. During Mindôn's reign an edict was published exempting Englishmen from the necessity of getting down on their knees in the mud and dust, but ordaining that they should lift their hats. The letyataung dearly loved to launch torrents of abuse at their victim, and make him dismount from his pony and remove his hat when the prince was half a block distant. In the spring of 1880 an English mercantile man was actually bullied into going down on his knees. But, as a rule, where it was possible, foreigners turned down a by-street, or into one of the waste plots of ground. This method of avoiding the annoyance was not open to a Burman. If he tried to avoid paying due obeisance, he was denounced as a disaffected man and thrown into jail.

But there were plenty of other obstructions to be met with in the streets of the royal city. Each householder was considered, or considered himself, perfectly at liberty to do what he pleased with the section of the road in front of his house. Accordingly, when the spirit moved him, he calmly blocked the thoroughfare by erecting a temporary theatre for the performance of a pwè. The construction of such a mandut did not take very long. A framework of bamboo was run up and covered in on the roof, and one side with bamboo matting, and all was ready; the stage was the street, and the spectators deposited themselves where they found room. After the three or four days' performance, the stage was pulled down, and the thoroughfare was clear again.

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of the funeral paraphernalia takes some time, and it is nowadays almost a matter of ceremonial necessity that all children and blood relations should assemble for the burial. Technically, if the death occurred on the last day of the month the funeral ceremonies should take place before midnight, certainly before the new moon appears. This rule, however, is far from being strictly observed nowadays. A poor man is buried as quickly as possible to save expense; a rich man's obsequies last according to the pride of his family and their inclination to spend money. The coffin, called hkaung, is usually covered with tinsel paper, or perhaps gilt. The talā, the bier, is shaded by a light canopy, or spire made of bamboo, and carried by means of four long bamboo poles. This pya-that is usually most gaily decorated with coloured pasteboard, tinsel, and paintings of different kinds, and looks strangely bright and theatrical to Europeans. It is carpentered and decorated in the street before the house, for it is from eight or ten to twenty or thirty feet in height, and often overtops all the houses in the quarter.

When the day fixed for the funeral arrives the yahans are invited to the house. They usually come in numbers proportioned to the amount of alms given. There is ordinarily an address in the house, dwelling mainly on the vanity of human wishes and the uncertainty and misery of life on earth. Then the coffin is brought out and placed on the platform made for it in the lower part of the pya-that. Over it is then thrown a paso if the deceased was a man, or a tamein or neckerchief if a woman. This usually conceals the coffin, unless it is richly gilt, or painted, as is sometimes the case, with figures of the nobler of the animals, such as lions, tigers, monkeys, and elephants. Then the distinctive garment is looped up so that all may see. Over this cloth are usually placed short sticks wrapped round with gold and silver paper, shwe bidôn and ngwe bidôn which were forbidden in Mandalay except to the officials. Equally contrary to the Yazagaing are the sanda ya-mya, two long streamers which come down from the top of the spire and are taken in the hands of as many of the personal friends as can get hold of them. The musket shots which are fired often during the processions would have entailed especially

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764 heavy punishment under Burman rule. Latterly some
● 525 laymen in Rangoon have even been bold enough to glorify the
178 funerals of their relatives with keinnaya, figures of men or women with bird-like feet and lower extremities. These spangled toys, which are commonly to be seen in all monasteries, are properly only used at the last ceremonies of a member of the sacred order. But when some men are bold enough even to flaunt the royal white umbrella, it is hardly to be expected that the distinctive honours of the yahans would be respected.

764 The procession having been formed, a start is made.
[735] At the head come the alms intended for the monks and for the poor, some carried by men, some by women, the sexes going in separate lines. After this come the pyin-sin, never in any very great numbers, unless the a-hlu be particularly bountiful. Following them comes the band, and often a troop of singers. These are always hired for the purpose, and their callousness is as little to be cast up against Burman natural affection as the unlovable doings of the mutes at an English funeral. Close upon the musicians comes the bier carried by six or eight young men. Then in a general crowd follow the relations, friends, and neighbours, all on foot. Many passers-by, total strangers, join in the procession from motives of piety. Here and there the men carrying the bier stop and dance in a curious fantastic way to the measures of
[533] the dirge of the singers. The funeral *misereres* are usually the composition of an improvisatore in the chorus, and deal with the life and death and good actions of the deceased. A measure called maung pyaung is the most generally used.

Occasionally there is a tug-of-war with a rope as at a pôngyi's funeral, one side exclaiming, "We must bury our dead"; the other, "You shall not take away my friend." As a matter of necessity the former party must conquer, but they sometimes have to get recruits from the crowd before they can manage it.

764 It is a matter of regulation that a funeral should never
823 go to the north or to the east. The graveyard is usually to the west of the village, and the dead should all be carried out of a walled town by a gate reserved for this purpose. In Mandalay this a-mingala tagā was that to the south-west,

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764 778 mould the paste into a small image of the Lord Buddha, which they set up in an honoured place in their houses, and make use of as the object of their morning and evening doxologies. Such images are called tha-yo.

764 ● 565 [778] Nowadays money and public estimation alone determine the character of the funeral; but formerly in Mandalay, apart from the ceremonial provided for a pôngyi byan, there were five kinds suitable for a layman—one for the sovereign; then for members of the royal family; thirdly, for nobles, and those who had received official rank, a rather precarious and dangerous possession; then for thuté, rich men—so designated by special patent, which placed them under the "protection" of the court, that is to say, made them accessible for the demand of "benevolences"; and finally, a funeral for ordinary people. The burials of the poor in Mandalay were gruesome spectacles. The body was carried to the graveyard in a big, roomy box, grown rickety with much use, or, more simply still, in a mat. The sandalās had dug a hole, little more than three feet deep. If it was not long enough the body was squeezed in without any regard for relatives feelings. Enough earth to cover it slightly was thrown on by the grave-diggers, and the howls and fights of the pariah dogs at night suggested how it was that epidemics did not arise.

In the case of the funeral, say of an Atwinwun's wife, the coffin might be gilt, with a web of white cotton cloth fastened at the head—velvet was only permissible for a person of royal blood; the bamboos composing the bier were covered with red cloth; the pasos, tameins, and so on, given in alms, were carried on long poles, each pole borne by two men. In the procession the insignia of the wun, his umbrellas, fans, kamauk, and the rest were carried in front; after the alms and yahans came a dozen or more young women, carrying the court dress and decorations of the deceased, then her state carriage and that of her husband, hers being usually a palanquin. The billets of wood on the funeral pyre were gilt. These honours were so greatly valued that not a single privilege would be omitted, though the husband had to borrow money for every single item. Indeed, were he to have omitted any of them, he might

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be in danger of losing all, as not sufficiently appreciating the dignities conferred upon him.

As soon as Mindôn Min died, or at least as soon as it was officially made known that he was dead (for there are great doubts as to whether he died on the 12th September or on the 1st October 1878, or on some date between these two), as soon as the ministerial announcement came out on the latter date, the bo-ho, the great drum and gong suspended in a tower by the eastern gate, were stopped. The new king's drum and gong were not sounded till nine o'clock in the evening of the funeral, after which they were struck in the ordinary way every three hours. Bands of soldiers and police with gongs patrolled the streets all night long to see that everything was quiet. The princes had been seized and cast into prison some time before, but there was a chance that their adherents might raise disturbances on their behalf, and this precaution was kept up for some time. Meanwhile a pagoda, to serve as a mausoleum, was being run up with the greatest expedition close to the Mint, on the eastern side of the palace, in the outer enclosure, and this was finished in four or five days. The king had specially requested that his body should not be burnt according to ordinary royal custom, and the Sinbyumè, the senior queen and chief mourner, had resolved that this wish should be respected.

The corpse was laid out in state, and on the 3rd October the greater number of the foreigners and the officials of inferior rank were admitted to look upon it. This ceremony was conducted in the Hman-nandaw, the "Glass Palace," a room in which Thibaw Min has received most Europeans since. The body lay in the fore part of the chamber on a gilt couch, or bedstead, studded with bits of glass, and was robed from head to foot in white, a piece of white satin covering the face. The royal number of white umbrellas was canopied overhead, and at the top part of the couch were arranged the regalia in a row. On this occasion the Sinbyumè and the Anauk Nammadaw, the favourite queen of the West Palace, sat by the couch and slowly waved gorgeous peacock fans. At other times the sonless queens took it in turn to watch by the body, two at a time.

533 178 [179] in Europe. Indeed the Buddhist religion so frowns upon music that it was practised rather shamefacedly and its devotees are often called *Phet-khwet-sā* (Eaters out of leaves), *i.e.* vagabonds. Even so recently as last year a learned old Burmese gentleman loth to depart this life without imparting all of his Burmese learning concluded a series of Burmese articles on Burmese music and dancing with an apology for having at all indulged in such frivolities.

533 181 178 ●535 177 Music found in the irrepressible gaiety of the Burmese people a fertile soil and it let its roots deep into the soil, and soon from occupational songs music developed into an art-form which finally invaded the towns, the capital and the royal palace. There it received fresh impetus from a system of competitive patronage in which the king himself joined with his own band. There also, apparently it received its classical nomenclature. Names which sound imposing enough—သရ ဂြာမ မြေ ဆွေ etc. *Svara, Mūrchana, Grama, Çruti* etc.—but meant for quite different things, must have been borrowed in their entirety for the sake of their classical origin, so that the names were not in accordance with what they stood for, even as the Greek names, by which the western ecclesiastical modes were distinguished, were not in accordance with those of the ancient Greek octave system from which the names were taken. Thus it seems Burmese musical theory in the classical manner is a grafted dignity which dignifies but does not apply. Indeed it seems yet to be written.

533 However, to go on with Mariano: "Pure Burmese melodies are beautiful in themselves. But on account of the preponderance of grace-notes (mordente, acciaccatura, appoggiatura) Europeans find it difficult to catch Burmese tunes." This is very true, but not true enough. Ornament in Burmese music does something more than preponderate. They themselves are an inherent part of the tunes. That is why when a Burmese song is taken down by a western musican and reproduced, the ornaments having been unappreciated and eschewed the 'tune' that remains no longer sounds Burmese. Fox Strangways explains succinctly:

> "We think of grace-notes as something which may but need not be added to the note, not as something actually inherent in it. If cultivated for their own sake or used at all in excess they are regarded by us as meretricious.....Indian 'grace' is different in kind. There never is the least suggestion of anything having been 'added' to the note which is graced. The note with the grace makes one utterance. The object of grace is, of course, to add importance to the particular note, but there are such varying degrees in which this may be done

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

The mean annual family income of cultivators is Rs. 1091 ($229), and the mean annual per capita income is Rs. 203 ($42). For non-cultivators, the comparable figures are Rs. 1210 ($254) and Rs. 276 ($57). However, when we compare median family incomes (a more reliable measure of central tendency for our sample) the apparent advantage of non-cultivators disappears; they receive Rs. 900 as against Rs. 910 for cultivators. The only significant difference in the range of incomes for the two groups is that some 7% of the non-cultivators receive incomes over Rs. 3500 ($735), while no cultivator receives over Rs. 3000. However, the idea is prevalent in the village that cultivation is a relatively unprofitable occupation and that it is possible to realize as much or more income by less arduous types of work.

The Indians of Tadagale are much more prosperous in terms of income, as shown below.

Table V

Family Incomes of Indians
(in rupees. Rs 100 = $21)

Income	No. Families
0- 500	0
500-1000	3
1001-1500	1
1501-2000	2
2001-2500	2
2501-3000	3
Over 7000*	4
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(*includes two families of Rs. 7200 each; one of Rs. 8640; and one of Rs. 18,000.)

The mean annual family income for the Indians is Rs. 4030 ($848), and the mean annual per capita income is Rs. 1343 ($281).

Differences in family incomes are not reflected in external status symbols, except in extreme cases. In poor families the type of house is usually bamboo and thatch, while among relatively prosperous families it is more likely to be of plank construction, with perhaps a galvanized iron roof. In the wealthier families the women have more silk longyis for dress occasions. Major differences in economic standing are often shown in the size, elaborateness and expensiveness of ceremonials, such as weddings and boys' initiation ceremonies, and in the contributions made towards the support of the Buddhist monks.

In general, however, wealth differences in Tadagale do not seem to provide any clear basis for differential association of persons. Kinship, which cuts across economic lines, is far more important. Although a few families are generally regarded as well off, they do not live apart from the rest of the community either in the spatial or social sense. Wealth does not appear to have any direct correlation with status, rank or privilege, or to form the

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

565 556 basis of invidious distinctions. Persons of means are esteemed more for the socially valued uses to which they may put their money, such as charity, ceremonial activities, and support of the clergy, than for sheer richness or consumption.

Economic Change

178 101 433 The changing pattern of Tadagale's economic life may be described from the point of view of shift from a once largely subsistence economy to one based more upon commodity production and exchange. In discussing this shift, the general trends are best indicated if we focus upon Lower Burma rather than upon Tadagale exclusively. It is desirable to make this large area our unit because pertinent data are available for it, whereas historical information specific to the village is somewhat scant and fragmentary. The term "Lower Burma" is an administrative and geographical one. It comprises about 81,000 square miles and a population of some 9 millions, four of the administrative divisions in the highly fertile, deltaic 'rice-bowl' of Burma.

178 433 1. Background. The trend from a relatively self-sufficient subsistence economy, with little dependence upon money, to a more commercialized economy coincides with the coming of British colonial rule in Burma. Our historical perspective thus extends over a period of about 150 years. Within this span of time, profound economic change occurred in Lower Burma. Here we cannot give a detailed account of events from decade to decade, but must limit ourselves to a brief consideration of the major trends.

175 433 361 In pre-British Lower Burma, villages consisted of what might be called islands of clearance in a big jungle. In these settlements the Burmese peasants lived by cultivation of paddy and vegetable gardens. Individual small holdings were the rule, and the size of the plot depended almost entirely upon need. No incentive existed to clear and cultivate land beyond the requirements of household subsistence and taxes, paid in kind, to the representative of the Burmese Crown. Cotton, from the dry zone of central Burma, was spun and woven into cloth, and garments were made in the local community. Housing was of a simple bamboo and thatch type, made of materials available locally. The bullock cart provided transport on the relatively few occasions that it was necessary for the Lower Burma villager to travel distances that could not be walked. Contact between villages was minimized by the expanses of intervening, uncleared jungle country. In Tadagale, for example, one of our oldest informants was able to recall the period of his youth, around 1885, when jungle clearance and settlement was still taking place, bringing Tadagale into closer communication with other communities in the area. Local craftsmen provided the villagers with simple utensils, tools and implements.

178 433 436 456 When British colonialism took over, money came to dominate over barter. Taxation was ordered to be paid in money. The Burmese cultivator was encouraged to clear the heavy jungle, cultivate more land, sell surpluses of paddy to commercial millers, and spend his money on attractive manufactured goods imported from England, which were on display in the town shops and bazaars. Moneylenders, some of them Burmese, but especially Indians of the moneylending Chettiar caste from Madras, who could enter Burma freely, were at hand to loan money in fairly unlimited amounts to the Burmese peasants. Thus the latter could finance the expansion of their cultivation. Rates of interest charged were unregulated, and commonly ranged from 10% to 35% per year. The Burmese peasant was an easy victim: he was, at first, entirely unsophisticated in money

thinking, being the mother of a son is itself considered the greatest event of a woman's life and represents the achievement of full existence as a female human being. The relationship is close and indulgent. The mother is regarded by her son as more important than his wife; in fact, a son normally will choose a wife with a great deal of regard for his mother's opinions and wishes. 593

Mother and Daughter. The mother is her daughter's early teacher. It is considered most important for the girl to learn prayers, how to prepare the daily food offering, and how to change the flowers on the household altar. These things are taught almost from the time the child begins to speak and understand. Other household duties in which a mother instructs her daughter vary considerably with the economic status of the family. In poor families some assistance with tending animals and winnowing the rice is part of the girl's work from about the age of ten. Daughters are expected to show filial respect and deference equally to the mother and father. 593 868 [565]

Father and Son. The father occupies the role of disciplinarian in the family. Disciplining of sons may include physical punishment, though such measures are not resorted to readily. Prior to adolescence, boys are taught prayers and good habits by their mothers, with the father remaining more or less in the background and interfering only when disciplinary action may be required of him. After a son passes adolescence the father becomes important as his mentor. 593 861

Husband and Wife's Elder Sister. This relationship tends to mirror a conflict between age and sex as status factors in the social structure. There is an implicit conflict between the husband's position as a man and his wife's elder sister's position, in many cases, as his senior, having a claim on outward respect and obedience. In practice this relationship is often cool and aloof in nature, very much in contrast to the free and easy one between a man and his wife's younger sisters. 607 182 602

Husband and Wife's Younger Sister. A man is expected to show great favor to his wife's younger sisters and to display more interest in them than in his own sisters. He buys them presents, gives them spending money when he can, and covertly he is expected to be on the lookout for prospective husbands for them. Quite frequently, the wife's younger sisters will accompany her and her husband when she marries, and all will live together in the same house. Although husband and wife's younger sisters engage in a great deal of mutual joking and teasing, the relationship does not normally assume a sexual aspect. Polygyny is permissable but very rarely practiced; when it is, however, it takes the sororal form. The rather free and easy relationship between a husband and his wife's younger sisters sometimes gives rise to village gossip -- especially when it is known that he and his wife are not getting along well -- that he is carrying on love affairs with his younger sisters-in-law. 607 587

In-Laws. A daughter-in-law is definitely subordinate to her mother-in-law. If they live in the same household, the mother-in-law is entitled to the best room and to be waited upon by her daughter-in-law. Significantly, the Burmese word for daughter-in-law (cwêmà) means 'sweat women. 606

The term for son-in-law (Ōamè?) means 'desired son.' A son-in-law is a privileged member of his wife's family. His wishes are respected and his comforts looked after. His mother-in-law instructs her younger children to show him respect and deference.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

—in fact, that beyond collecting a certain amount of taxes, and appointing governors to the different provinces, it hardly made itself felt outside Mandalay and the large river towns. The people to a great extent governed themselves. They had a very good system of village government, and managed nearly all their local affairs. But beyond the presence of a governor, there was but little to attach them to the central government. There was, and is, absolutely no aristocracy of any kind at all. The Burmese are a community of equals, in a sense that has probably never been known elsewhere. All their institutions are the very opposite to feudalism. Now, feudalism was instituted to be useful in war. The Burmese customs were instituted that men should live in comfort and ease during peace; they were useless in war. So the natural leaders of a people, as in other countries, were absent. There were no local great men; the governors were men appointed from time to time from Mandalay, and usually knew nothing of their charges; there were no rich men, no large landholders—not one. There still remained, however, one institution that other nations have made useful in war, namely, the organization of religion. For Buddhism is fairly well organized—certainly much better than ever the government was. It has its heads of monasteries, its Gaing-dauks, its Gaing-oks, and finally the Thathanabaing, the head of the Burmese Buddhism. The overthrow of King Thibaw had not injured any of this. This was an organization in touch with the whole people, revered and honoured by every man and woman and child in the country. In this

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER IX

HAPPINESS

'The thoughts of his heart, these are the wealth of a man.
Burmese saying.

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As I have said, there was this very remarkable fact in Burma—that when you left the king, you dropped at once to the villager. There were no intermediate classes. There were no nobles, hereditary officers, great landowners, wealthy bankers or merchants.

Then there is no caste; there are no gilds of trade, or art, or science. If a man discovered a method of working silver, say, he never hid it, but made it common property. It is very strange how absolutely devoid Burma is of the exclusiveness of caste so universal in India, and which survives to a great extent in Europe. The Burman is so absolutely enamoured of freedom, that he cannot abide the bonds which caste demands. He will not bind himself with other men for a slight temporal advantage; he does not consider it worth the trouble. He prefers remaining free and poor to being bound and rich. Nothing is further from him

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

than the feeling of exclusiveness. He abominates secrecy, mystery. His religion, his women, himself, are free; there are no dark places in his life where the light cannot come. He is ready that everything should be known, that all men should be his brothers.

And so all the people are on the same level. Richer and poorer there are, of course, but there are no very rich; there is none so poor that he cannot get plenty to eat and drink. All eat much the same food, all dress much alike. The amusements of all are the same, for entertainments are always free. So the Burman does not care to be rich. It is not in his nature to desire wealth, it is not in his nature to care to keep it when it comes to him. Beyond a sufficiency for his daily needs money has not much value. He does not care to add field to field or coin to coin; the mere fact that he has money causes him no pleasure. Money is worth to him what it will buy. With us, when we have made a little money we keep it to be a nest-egg to make more from. Not so a Burman: he will spend it. And after his own little wants are satisfied, after he has bought himself a new silk, after he has given his wife a gold bangle, after he has called all his village together and entertained them with a dramatic entertainment — sometimes even before all this—he will spend the rest on charity.

He will build a pagoda to the honour of the great teacher, where men may go to meditate on the great laws of existence. He will build a monastery school where the village lads are taught,

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

and where each villager retires some time in his life to learn the great wisdom. He will dig a well or build a bridge, or make a rest-house. And if the sum be very small indeed, then he will build, perhaps, a little house—a tiny little house—to hold two or three jars of water for travellers to drink. And he will keep the jars full of water, and put a little cocoanut-shell to act as cup.

The amount spent thus every year in charity is enormous. The country is full of pagodas; you see them on every peak, on every ridge along the river. They stand there as do the castles of the robber barons on the Rhine, only with what another meaning! Near villages and towns there are clusters of them, great and small. The great pagoda in Rangoon is as tall as St. Paul's; I have seen many a one not three feet high—the offering of some poor old man to the Great Name, and everywhere there are monasteries. Every village has one, at least; most have two or three. A large village will have many. More would be built if there was anyone to live in them, so anxious is each man to do something for the monks. As it is, more are built than there is actual need for.

There are rest-houses everywhere. Far away in the dense forests by the mountain-side you will find them, built in some little hollow by the road-side by someone who remembered his fellow-traveller. You cannot go five miles along any road without finding them. In villages they can be counted by tens, in towns by fifties. There are far more than are required.

In Burmese times such roads and bridges as

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

were made were made in the same way by private charity. Nowadays, the British Government takes that in hand, and consequently there is probably more money for rest-house building than is required. As time goes on, the charity will flow into other lines, no doubt, in addition. They will build and endow hospitals, they will devote money to higher education, they will spend money in many ways, not in what we usually call charity, for that they already do, nor in missions, as whatever missions they may send out will cost nothing. Holy men are those vowed to extreme poverty. But as their civilization (*their* civilization, not any imposed from outside) progresses, they will find out new wants for the rich to supply, and they will supply them. That is a mere question of material progress.

The inclination to charity is very strong. The Burmans give in charity far more in proportion to their wealth than any other people. It is extraordinary how much they give, and you must remember that all of this is quite voluntary. With, I think, two or three exceptions, such as gilding the Shwe Dagon pagoda, collections are never made for any purpose. There is no committee of appeal, no organized collection. It is all given straight from the giver's heart. It is a very marvellous thing.

I remember long ago, shortly after I had come to Burma, I was staying with a friend in Toungoo, and I went with him to the house of a Burman contractor. We had been out riding, and as we returned my friend said he wished to see the contractor about some business, and so we rode to his

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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565 house. He came out and asked us in, and we dismounted and went up the stairs into the veranda, and sat down. It was a little house built of wood, with three rooms. Behind was a little kitchen and a stable. The whole may have cost a thousand rupees. As my friend and the Burman talked of their business, I observed the furniture. There was very little; three or four chairs, two tables and a big box were all I could see. Inside, no doubt, were a few beds and more chairs. While we sat the wife and daughter came out and gave us cheroots, and I talked to them in my very limited Burmese till my friend was ready. Then we went away.

565 741 That contractor, so my friend told me as we went home, made probably a profit of six or seven thousand rupees a year. He spent on himself about a thousand of this; the rest went in charity. The great new monastery school, with the marvellous carved façade, just to the south of the town, was his, the new rest-house on the mountain road far up in the hills was his. He supported many monks, he gave largely to the gilding of the pagoda. If a theatrical company came that way, he subscribed freely. Soon he thought he would retire from contracting altogether, for he had enough to live on quietly for the rest of his life.

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565 553 His action is no exception, but the rule. You will find that every well-to-do man has built his pagoda or his monastery, and is called 'school-builder' or 'pagoda-builder.' These are the only titles the Burman knows, and they always are given most scrupulously. The builder of a bridge, a well,

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

565 or a rest-house may also receive the title of 'well-
553 builder,' and so on, but such titles are rarely used in common speech. Even the builder of a long shed for water-jars may call himself after it if he likes, but it is only big builders who receive any title from their fellows. But the satisfaction to the man himself, the knowledge that he has done a good deed, is much the same, I think.

741 A Burman's wants are very few, such wants as
181 money can supply—a little house, a sufficiency of
517 plain food, a cotton dress for weekdays, and a silk one for holidays, and that is nearly all.

You see, they are still a very young people. Many wants will come, perhaps, later on, but just now their desires are easily satisfied.

The Burman does not care for a big house, for there are always the great trees and the open spaces by the village. It is far pleasanter to sit out of doors than indoors. He does not care for books. He has what is better than many books—the life of his people all about him, and he has the eyes to see it and the heart to understand it. He cares not to see with other men's eyes, but with his own; he cares not to read other men's thoughts, but to think his own, for a love of books only comes to him who is shut always from the world by ill-health, by poverty, by circumstance. When we are poor and miserable, we like to read of those who are happier. When we are shut in towns, we love to read of the beauties of the hills. When we have no love in our hearts, we like to read of those who have. Few men who think their own thoughts care much to read the thoughts of others, for a man's

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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a boy who cannot. If there were more nunneries, there would be more education among the women; here is cause and effect. But there are not, so the little girls work instead. While their brothers are in the monasteries, the girls are learning to weave and herd cattle, drawing water, and collecting firewood. They begin very young at this work, but it is very light; they are never overworked, and so it does them no harm usually, but good.

The daughters of better-class people, such as merchants, and clerks, and advocates, do not, of course, work at field labour. They usually learn to read and write at home, and they weave, and many will draw water. For to draw water is to go to the well, and the well is the great meeting-place of the village. As they fill their jars they lean over the curb and talk, and it is here that is told the latest news, the latest flirtation, the little scandal of the place. Very few men or boys come for water; carrying is not their duty, and there is a proper place for flirtation. So the girls have the well almost to themselves.

Almost every girl can weave. In many houses there are looms where the girls weave their dresses and those of their parents; and many girls have stalls in the bazaar. Of this I will speak later. Other duties are the husking of rice and the making of cheroots. Of course, in richer households there will be servants to do all this; but even in them the daughter will frequently weave either for herself or her parents. Almost every girl will do something, if only to pass the time.

They have no accomplishments. They do not

16:Fielding-Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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CHAPTER XV

WOMEN—II

'The husband is lord of the wife.'
Laws of Manu.

MARRIAGE is not a religious ceremony among the Burmese. Religion has no part in it at all; as religion has refrained from interfering with government, so does it in the relations of man and wife. Marriage is purely a worldly business, like entering into partnership; and religion, the Buddhist religion, has nothing to do with such things. Those who accept the teachings of the great teacher in all their fulness do not marry.

Indeed, marriage is not a ceremony at all. It is strange to find that the Burmese have actually no necessary ceremonial. The Laws of Manu, which are the laws governing all such matters, make no mention of any marriage ceremony; it is, in fact, a status. Just as two men may go into partnership in business without executing any deed, so a man and a woman may enter into the marriage state without undergoing any form. Amongst the richer Burmese there is, however, sometimes a ceremony.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

585 Friends are called to the wedding, and a ribbon is stretched round the couple, and then their hands are clasped; they also eat out of the same dish. All this is very pretty, but not at all necessary.

It is, indeed, not a settled point in law what constitutes a marriage, but there are certain things that will render it void. For instance, no marriage can be a marriage without the consent of the girl's parents if she be under age, and there are certain other conditions which must be fulfilled.

But although there be this doubt about the actual ceremony of marriage, there is none at all about the status. There is no confusion between a woman who is married and a woman who is not. The condition of marriage is well known, and it brings the parties under the laws that pertain to husband and wife. A woman not married does not, of course, obtain these privileges; there is a very strict line between the two.

585 Amongst the poorer people a marriage is frequently
● 585 kept secret for several days. The great pomp and
157 ceremony which with us, and occasionally with a few rich Burmese, consecrate a man and a woman to each other for life, are absent at the greater number of Burmese marriages; and the reason they tell me is that the girl is shy. She does not like to be stared at, and wondered at, as a maiden about to be a wife; it troubles her that the affairs of her heart, her love, her marriage, should be so public. The young men come at night and throw stones upon the house roof, and demand presents from the bridegroom. He does not mind giving the presents; but he, too, does not like the publicity. And so

pagodas and those throughout the country are descendants of the pagoda slaves.

Beggars are rated below the pagoda slaves - but, because of the Buddhist merit associated with giving do well for themselves. The beggars live in communities on the outskirts of the town often in cemeteries. They are thought to exhume the dead to get the coins placed in the mouth of the deceased to ensure expenses on his journey to heaven. The wood of the coffin is believed to be used in constructing their huts. Professional undertakers or morticians are regarded with horror since they like the beggars, make their living from the dead. The functions of burial are performed gratis by the entire village. A story is currently going round the University dormitories telling of an immensely wealthy Burmese coffin maker in Rangoon who has offered riches to the young man who will marry his beautiful daughter. When the future seems blank the students' friend advises "Hey, why don't you go and marry the coffin maker's daughter?" It seems that the money would scarcely compensate for the social discrimation. The extent to which the occupation classes are rigid in marriage and other social exchanges is an interesting problem.

A young man is obliged to remain within the occupation class of his family or to rise to greater heights. He is advised at an early age to "be simple, aim high, and tell the truth." When children play at dacoits (thieves) or other "low class" games their parents object to their low aspirations and advise them to play nobles and ministers. One would feel justified in remaining idle rather than accept a position below that of his birth. It is better to accept a clerks job at a low salary than an artisans at a high salary. On the other hand those born into lower status occupation groups tend to be satisfied with their state as a condition of birth. In Rangoon, however, even the haulers may have ambitions to achieve fame and fortune. The opportunities for social mobility is greater in the towns and cities but difinitely restricted in the villages.

Apprenticeship to trades begins at the age of 12 to 14 years, and usually lasts for several years. Ordinarily the youth is attached to the shop of a relative where he lives and is payed a subsistence wage while learning. The key to high positions lies in education in

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the husband is too old to work. Aged parents are invariably respected but those who can still support themselves are "worshipped". Parents do not rely on their sons who have their own families to support but feel that their daughters will always "bring them a cup of curry".

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The third urge is to have wealth to donate to the Buddhist church. This is regarded as a sound investment since it not only brings a most satisfying honour especially in old age (to be a "pagoda giver") but also counts as merit credited to the individual's account in eternity.

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Competition is keenly felt between individuals and families of the same occupation group or adjacent groups but not between the lower and upper classes. An exception is where family traditional land has changed hands - and hard feelings may persist. A carpenter's family does not envy and covet the riches of a government official's family. His lot is due to KARMA and even if he wished to attain such fortune it would be beyond his abilities. More important, it is not expected of him. So the carpenter is content with cheap jewelry for his women and an occasional gold coin - but the pattern is the same as for the upper class. However among the individuals and families of an occupation level there is much rivalry for the benefits wealth can bring. It is a point of pride to have the largest diamonds at a social function, and to give the biggest pagoda. Wives brag that their husbands "prevent the hairs of their hands from singeing" - that they have servants to cook. Rank and recognition are based on these considerations.

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The women of the family exert powerful influence in financial matters and are respected for their sound judgement. Women's occupations include cigar manufacturing, pottery making, and especially shop keeping.

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The beginning of an enterprise is conditioned by the wisdom of the ancients and especially the date and place which are given by formula in the Burmese calendar. There are NET-NAZA (day king of) "fortunate days" and PYAD-THADA "unlucky days". For example the calendar announces that Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays of a particular month are fortunate days to begin enterprises, and other days either unfortunate or neutral. Rangoon sophisticates (but never villagers) tell such stories as this: Two phongyis travelled by boat; the first boarded the boat on a fortunate day to begin travelling. The next day the boat came to the second phongyi's village. This was an unfortunate

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Westernization is invading the woman's sphere more slowly than the man's. However, the use of lipstick is now appearing among the upperclass of town people - along with modern brassieres and nylon KIMONIS with short sleeves. This is deplored by the more conservative as too revealing. The hair is shorter than formerly though the styles are only modified western daytype. A most important influence in the westernization of dress of the upper classes have been the American films.

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gives important data on the process of urbanizing villagers - the country people are an important group in the growth of the Burmese section of Rangoon; probably a large section of the present refugee population will stay in the future.

The concepts of pattern of living and standard of living: The Burmese pattern of living, or any culture pattern, is a universe of beliefs and practices manifested in acts and artifacts. The analogy of the "Universe" is a useful one in that it recognizes a guiding body of understandings that controls the whole of the society (like "laws" of Universe) while emphasizing the particular understandings that govern the various groups or classes of the society (like the "laws" of the Solar and other systems within the Universe). The "solar systems" are the standard levels of operations forming a comprehensive set of forces within itself. Families, like U Myaing's have a mobility, in the case understudy a forced change, which takes them out of one standard system into another. The adjustments which they undergo reflects the "laws" which control the various standard levels as well as the basic concepts controlling the whole of the society.

Each belief and practice has a range of expressions which can be defined. The particular expression practiced by a family is the standard or level of a phenomenon capable of expansion or contraction within prescribed limits. The ultimate limits are defined by the total range of expressions for the culture as a whole. But the practical limits for a family are defined by the possibilities of the society segment (community) in which they find themselves. Thus, the range of U Myaing's possibilities of expression are much greater in Rangoon than they were in Pathwe and greatly exceed his original ideas of what was possible. He may, for example, become a highly westernized political leader - although this seems unlikely in terms of his expectations. The westernized, urban spheres of Burmese culture is now opened to the family.

U Myaing is motivated by the basic expectations of the Burmese culture at a level applicable to his situation in terms of the possibilities of his social environment. In Pathwe, he was a fisherman and aspired to those things that fishermen should. In camp, he was at

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first a bewildered refugee, but gradually assumed the role of a labourer rising in the ranks. The case indicates the mobility of the Burmese family and shows clearly that it may function successfully outside of the confines of its original social atmosphere.

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The family in Burmese society: The successful mobility of U Myaing's family indicate that the immediate family is the primary social unit of Burmese society. The Burmese community is then a congregation of immediate families who engage in activities of mutual benefit within the protective framework of the village structure. This interpretation high lights a particular type of individualism which is a family individualism depending on the roles of each

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member of the family for its full expression. This concept seems tied to the Buddhist idea of individual salvation through acts of merit on the one hand and the exigencies of gaining a livelihood on the other.

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The family is the basic economic unit and though it will enter cooperative endeavours (like the IN fisheries, or communal nat propitiations), has the ultimate responsibility and capabilities of supporting itself.

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The extended family is important, as indeed is the total village social structure, only in so far as it contributes to the maintenance of the individual immediate family of procreation including spouses, offspring and aged parents. The "looseness" of the social structure conversely allows mobility of the immediate families. This analysis indicates that attempts at modernising of the Burmese people (acculturation) should meet with a minimum of structural obstacles - such as caste, clan and rigid associations might present.

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The Burmese culture pattern and the individual: The village culture pattern is dominated by a series of relatively simple, interrelated ideas held by all. Each individual feels himself temporily occupying a particular situation which is only one of many existences and but an instant in eternity. He is fated to be a member of a particular family with a set of opportunities through life. Life should be pleasant and must be virtuous if future existences are to be pleasant. He must realize as fully as possible the talents and opportunities that come to him through his KARMA situation. In the villages this concept is a great stabilising force and tends to make an individual content with

his lot. It also tends toward a kind of stratification of society where the boundaries, however, are neither sharp nor fast. Each person is comfortably installed in his place and competes, mildly, only with those of his own level. The obligations (as contributions for ceremonies) are in terms of one's ability, and his status is in terms of his virtues. Status is closely correlated with increasing age. This concept motivate the Burmese in the village within "KARMA groups". 181 156 364 555 [561] [554]

The unusual individual may transcend his family positions in exceptional cases - by marriage or achievement. Achievement by physical force has been a means of mobility in the past - there is the tradition of the strong man leader who comes from humble origins. Mobility by entrepreneur achievement (rice mill owners; traders) has been greatly stimulated with increased western contacts. U Myaing was a sort of entrepreneur in Pathwe. In Rangoon the opportunities are great and some Burmese are successfully embracing this, as yet, somewhat unfamiliar course. The western entrepreneur concept appears to be finding a fertile ground in the traditional "group individualism" of the Burmese. 156 555 557 [177]

The standards or levels of culture: When U Myaing's standard of living plummeted downwards as a refugee he became discontented and unhappy desiring to return to the "plateau" of his former level. At first he could only think of returning to Pathwe to achieve this, but as [illegible] begins to crown his efforts in Rangoon he now feels the beginnings of a sense of achievement. . . In his refugee situation there was no sense of shame for his reduction - the events contributing to his downfall were beyond his control, and he had lived "as a refugee should" in which his abilities and obligations were balanced. This resulted in an attitude of cheerful patience understandable in terms of the KARMA concept. 511 181 558

The two standards, in Pathwe and camp, represent balanced levels ranging from the "average" Burmese villages situation to close to the minimum. Higher standards than those of Pathwe are seen in the administrative class of Rangoon and other major towns where western influences are strong (car, western furniture and household utensils, westernised house and clothing, etc.). Lower standards may be 511 565 [177]

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represented by the boat and shack dwellers of Rangoon's water-front as well as the beggar class of the villages.

Future Studies: This study has explored a portion of the Burmese culture pattern seen in dynamic situation of one family's case. It has indicated the importance of the family unit in Burmese society and expressed qualitatively two levels or standards of living. A study of a functioning community to define the interworkings of the family group and other social groups is being carried out at the present time by the Burma Community Research Project of the Department of Anthropology, University of Rangoon. The hypothesis developed in this paper will be further explored and new concepts of Burmese culture and society developed in the village project.

So the worship of the nats lived on, and with the advance of
795 civilization the spirit dances became elaborate, for though the belief
535 was primitive, the people were no longer so. The dances benefited from the developments that had taken place in Burmese music which, as we have seen, flourished under the patronage of the Pagan kings. New spirits were added, and they were usually those of heroic princes. The dancers were now many, for the mediums turned themselves into dancing and music mistresses. The chief medium of each spirit dressed herself in the special dress of the spirit, but the junior mediums, who were equivalent to the chorus of an English revue, were in the dress of Burmese princesses. It is interesting to note the
[292] origin of this dress. The mediums realized the necessity of dressing
[565] themselves in fine raiment, but as everybody wore clothes of bright colours, the only solution of the problem was to don the dress of the court and official class, which the commoners were forbidden to
[530] wear by law, except during feasts and dances. When drama proper came into being, the hero and the heroine dressed themselves in the court dress, even when they were representing common characters.

3. Miracles and Interludes

175 After the fall of the kingdom of Pagan in A.D. 1257, Burma was
369 the scene of fierce civil wars, but the trouble was mainly in the
726 capitals; in the villages and small towns life went on in its joyous
779 way. Religion continued to spread in spite of the fact that the throne
538 of Pagan was no longer in existence to support it. Learning began to reach the remotest parts of the country, carried far and near by monks. To escape from the aimless strife of the civil wars, men turned towards literature. Money was lacking to compose poems in brick as had been done at Pagan, and men now expressed their love for the religion and their love for the beautiful in writing. The new literature further educated the people and made even stronger the already strong religious fervour. As a result, at village feasts and on days of public rejoicing, the people turned towards their religion for amusement and entertainment. So pageants depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha and from his Birth Stories came into being.

796 Pageants were given on ordinary carts that were in use for all
541 kinds of transport and which are still in use in backward parts of the
493 country at the present day. Each cart carried a group of (amateur) actors standing still and representing a set scene. Originally, no doubt, there were only a few carts representing scenes from different stories. Later, a pageant came to consist of many carts and many

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
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subject of the English morality plays. Again and again we find writers writing and actors saying in the prologue or epilogue that a play represents but life in its various stages; as man begins in laughter and ends in misery and death, a play begins with the happiness of the hero and heroine, and then goes on to tell of their misery and parting. To the conservative Burmese Buddhist, professional acting was a sin, and to get over the difficulty, the idea came into being that the play was only a species of preaching the religion. The existence of that idea perhaps supports my theory that there actually were plays dealing with morals which would favour the rise of such an idea. Perhaps the strongest evidence that there was a morality stage in the history of the development of Burmese drama is the existence of a popular play which has never been printed, but which is still sometimes acted. The play has no title. A rich miser marries a young wife and soon dies. The wife at once remarries. The miser now in Hell sues the wife and the new husband before the court of the governor of Hell, for the restitution of the property he had so patiently gathered and hoarded. There is a trial, and after hearing the arguments of both sides, the judge decides in favour of the young couple. The play ends with the judge moralizing on the emptiness and transitory nature of human riches. The play is quite crude and short, so that when presented today the actors have to lengthen the play to make it last the night. There is very little action, and the king of later dramas is absent. The names of the characters are general and abstract; Mister Miserly, Mistress Wife, Master New Husband, and Death (who takes the old husband to Hell).

The interlude was extremely popular, and at the court, at the houses of officials (the Burmese had no hereditary nobility, and the officials were the nobles) and at public feasts and festivals the interlude was presented. The importance of the interlude in the development of Burmese drama is great, but the importance of the professional actors who first presented the interlude in the development of the acting profession and stage conventions is even greater. The fact that the original members of the profession were outside the social pale caused all actors and actresses to be looked down upon; that fact explains why in an essentially democratic society it was said with contempt that 'beggars and actors, they are the eaters of food thrown away as waste'.[1]

[1] The stage conventions and the acting profession are described in detail in chap. vii.

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
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536 114 adheres tenaciously to the tradition of royalty. Hero and heroine are prince and princess, their retinue courtiers, and the countrymen jester and clown; the king is idealized, his deputies travestied.' In short, the Burmese drama is narrow in range. These opinions of Ridgeway are true and just in many respects, but they have also their weakness. He errs in thinking that Burmese drama is still in the undeveloped lyrical stage. What he thinks to be an earlier stage is [178] in reality a later one. Dancing and singing have dominated the Burmese *pwe* (the public presentation of a play) since the fall of the kingdom, but that stage was only reached after decadence had set in in the drama developed so well by U Kyin U and U Pon Nya. What Mr Taw Sein Kho described in his letter to the Director-General of the Archæological Survey, what most other informants of Ridgeway also saw, was Burmese drama in decadence and distortion. The scene of the drama is not always the palace, though the palace and its inmates appear almost always in Burmese plays. The forest, village, city and the common people often appear, though it is true that they are subordinated to the dramatic interest in the palace and its inmates. ●[565] Burmese drama was forced to confine itself in general to the palace, as in a society where other class distinctions scarcely existed, the king and his courtiers alone were different from the rest: and, in general, a Burmese audience wanted characters somewhat different from those of common life. The same was true of the Elizabethan drama. Though the 'domestic' drama was popular, the best plays of the Elizabethans have their scenes in distant lands or in high society. Therefore the narrowness of its range does not necessarily make out Burmese drama to be in an early stage of growth. For the sake of completeness, I have described briefly these aspects of the drama, but they will be considered in detail in later chapters.

The opinions expressed by Sir William Ridgeway are full of error. The worth of the chapter on Burmese drama in his *Dramas and Dramatic Dances of Non-European Races* consists in this, that it was he who made the first attempt to study the development of Burmese drama scientifically, to compare it with the drama of other countries, and to form an estimate of it according to western standards of criticism. And, erroneous though his views are, it is much to his credit that with the scanty and often misleading information before him he could give such a shrewd estimate of Burmese drama.

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
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made. In about 1855 he wrote his first play, *Padusa*. In the next year the two brothers, the king and the prince, quarrelled, and when the misunderstanding had been explained, U Pon Nya was ordered to write a play to celebrate the occasion, and *The Water-seller* was composed and presented. As reward, the king appointed him chief court-poet and created him lord of Ywaza village. He would have been made a ruling chief or official had he not been born with a crippled arm, because a man born with any defect in his limbs could not become a member of the ruling class. U Pon Nya took part in various court intrigues. Most of his plays had some hidden meaning that concerned the court, and they played an important part in the plots and counter-plots to decide who was to be heir, for though Kanaung was officially the heir, the king's sons did not accept him.

In 1865 Myingun and Myingondaing, two of the king's sons, decided to make a bid for the throne. They consulted U Pon Nya as to the most suitable time as foretold by the stars, and the poet told them that the next day at noon was the luckiest time for the rebellion. This connivance in a rebellion against his king and his master, Prince Kanaung, was a very disloyal and ungrateful act, because the fiery temper of the two princes was well known, and it was plain from the beginning that the rebellious sons intended to put to death at once their own father, and their uncle, who also happened to be the father-in-law of Myingun. U Pon Nya defended himself later by saying that he was compelled to give his opinion as to the most suitable time, because he was threatened with certain death. But he did not inform the king of the plot when the princes had left after promising him the highest rank of nobility; and though he might have been threatened with death at the beginning, he seemed to have been well content with the promised reward and quietly left the capital that night. The next day at noon, the rebellion broke out. The courts of justice where the crown prince and the wisest in the land were sitting in session were attacked, and the palace raided. The king escaped, but the crown prince and his fellow-judges were killed. The rebellion was put down the same afternoon, but by then the flower of the court and the nobility had perished. The two rebels escaped, Myingondaing to die of fever at Rangoon, and Myingun to retirement in French Indo-China. U Pon Nya was arrested and tried on a charge of treason by the king himself, and though a sentence of death was clearly deserved,

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
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ose ladies of the court, junior queens, who were indulging in
omantic intrigues with courtiers. It is amusing to reflect that even
a monk, U Pon Nya himself was suspected of having had amorous
dventures, and he lost his life through his friendship with the
harming ladies of the governor's household. The first performance
f the play was received with an uproar of protest on the part of the
ourt-ladies, and they clamoured for the destruction of every copy of
he play. But there was much that was new and interesting in it, and
he general opinion was that a new dramatist of rich promise had
risen. Therefore the king, before whom the performance was made,
id not yield to the clamours of the ladies, but ordered that their
equest to U Pon Nya asking him to write another play praising the
irtues in women, should be complied with. As a result, he wrote
Vaythandaya.

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The great merit of the play is in its lyrical qualities (which I am
nable to reproduce in my translation). The vigour of the verse, its
hythm, the harmonious and elaborate rhyme scheme, the richness of
he imagery, all join together to make this play the most lyrical in
Burmese drama. However, these very qualities were the butt of
riticism by contemporary critics who, used to the straightforward
nd clear style of U Kyin U and his imitators, held that too rich a
anguage was a fault in a play, for there would be a danger of
onveying wrong or obscure meanings to the audience. As those
ritics belonged to the 'people's' stage, they were of course thinking
f the less learned audience outside the court circles. There is no
loubt that in some scenes of *Paduma* the charge of difficulty
nd obscurity of language is quite justified. For example, when the
rocodile and Paduma speak about women loving dogs and pigs,
U Pon Nya is speaking only metaphorically, but one realises it is so
nly on a second or third reading of the play. But the language in the
cene where Paduma and his princess are running away to safety, is
s clear as it is beautiful.[1]

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3. *The Water-seller*

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The story of this play also is taken unchanged from a *Jataka*. A
prince returns to his city after a stay at a university in India. As he
ests for a few minutes outside the gates, a water-seller enters, and in
soliloquy says that he is just entering the city to sell water and earn

[1] A translation of this play is given in appendix v.

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
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536* 534 462 463 part, although there was no stage convention preventing women from taking it up as a vocation. The head of the orchestra was also the head of the troupe. He was the most learned and experienced member, and he was responsible for the organization and financial outlay, paying more or less fixed wages to the others, and taking the profits himself. When engaged for a performance, the troupe was paid by public subscription or by some philanthropic person, usually an official, and therefore no charge for admission was made, all being [565] welcome to it. The Burmese actors as a class, unlike their Elizabethan counterparts who could endow a College of God's Gift or buy a coat-of-arms, were poor. But they never starved, for even the poorest villages would welcome and feed them on their wanderings all over the country. The troupe was one large family, and the children of the members accompanied it. In spite of the prejudice against them and their poverty, the actors loved their art, and enjoyed the performances themselves.

536* There were many conventions connected with the stage, and they can be divided into two classes: those imposed on the actors by themselves, and those imposed by the fear of becoming unpopular with the audience.

795 536* The actors never forgot that they were originally spirit-dancers, and therefore they had conventions by which they showed their indebtedness to spirit worship. Before the performance offerings of food were made to the thirty-seven *nats*. As a curtain-raiser, there was a performance by a dancer or chorus of dancers. Each wore a red [533] cloth round the head—the sign of a spirit worshipper. Singing invocations to the *nats* and dancing the appropriate dances, they asked for protection by the spirits, while the orchestra played a bar from each [751] of the thirty-seven *nat* tunes. It was supposed that if this convention was broken, disaster would befall the troupe, the performance would prove a failure, and the actors would become mad; but often these conventions had been known to be broken, accidentally or otherwise.

536* 463 559 [779] The actors were looked upon as irreligious and immoral, and on the slightest excuse, they were in danger of being considered profane. Therefore, as has been stated, they took over the conventions from the *Nibbatkhin*. The Buddha was never impersonated, and an *arahat* or saint only when absolutely necessary, and then by an able and 'serious' actor, who had to keep a fast that day. Not even a mild joke was to be made against the Buddha or an *arahat*, although even monks and the religion itself could be the butt of a clown's wit. But

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 APl Burma
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a simple, straightforward affirmation, but it is not denial. No religion could so persist if it merely brought man's elemental aspirations to a sharp cliff and threw them over.

5. *Burmese Buddhism*

If there are good reasons for approaching the subject of religious paradox by a study of Buddhism, there are also good reasons for considering Buddhism as it appears in Burma where it is still a living and a dominant religion.

In the study of great religious traditions there is always need to maintain a balance between regard for the written texts and for the living expression. To consult one without the other is to misinterpret both. What the Christmas stories in the gospels mean to Christians cannot be fully discerned if they are isolated from Christmas observance any more than the Jātaka stories of Buddhism can be fully appreciated until they are read in the context of popular faith, with its drama and poetry. And what an entirely misleading impression of monastic Buddhism one might get from the Abhidhamma literature unless one has seen something of the life of a Buddhist monastery! This balance, as our Burmese critic observed, has not always been maintained in the study of Southern Buddhism.

Burma provides exceptional opportunities for such a study. "If anybody wants to know and see Buddhism as conceived and preached by the Buddha himself so far as the Saṃgha life goes," says a recent writer, "one can see a nearest approach to it in the monasteries of Burma.... Of all the Indianised lands of South-eastern Asia, Burma is indeed the only country where monastic Buddhism of the Theravāda nikāya survives to this day in its pristine purity."[24] And the same writer emphasises the impact of this monastic life on Burmese life and culture.

In Burma, eighty-five per cent of the inhabitants are Buddhists. Of these, one in every hundred is a Buddhist monk. Go where you will, you find the yellow robe of the Order, the pagoda gleaming white across the plain or on the hillside, the monastery in every village, intimately related to the life of the people. This has been the situation for centuries. Here one can see Buddhism in action; one can try to interpret its symbols in the light of the very real, if rustic, civilisation which it has shaped and maintained. Burma is one of the most interesting countries in the Orient. Its people are literate. There is freedom from caste, and, for that matter, scarcely any class system. In the days of the monarchy, "when you left the king, you dropped at once to the villager."[25] An Englishman observed,

[24] Nihar-Ranjan Ray, *Theravāda Buddhism in Burma*, chap. VII, p. 262.
[25] Fielding Hall, *The Soul of a People*, chap. IX, p. 106.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
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565 562 779* in the middle of the last century, that Burmese women not only enjoyed a much freer and higher position than elsewhere in the East but, in some matters, had attained rights that their sisters in England were still seeking to obtain.[26] These and similar aspects of Burmese life must be attributed in large degree to the dominant influence of Buddhism in a country which has been left for hundreds of years, shut away from the surrounding world by its seaboard and mountain barriers, to work out its own salvation with only occasional interference from outside until modern times.

779* 174 177 It is possible that the first Buddhist monastery in Burma was established more than two thousand years ago. While we may be sceptical of the legend which attributes the conversion of the first Burmese disciples to the Buddha himself, there is perhaps less reason than formerly to question the persistent Burmese tradition that missionaries were sent from India to Burma after the Third Great Council in the time of Aśoka. We have, at any rate, shreds of reliable evidence relating to the early centuries of the Christian era. In Burma, as elsewhere, the archaeologist has been active in recent years and there are also illuminating references in Chinese and other texts. Examining the evidence now available, Mr. Nihar-Ranjan Ray has presented a substantial argument for the conclusion that Buddhism was introduced to Burma possibly in Aśoka's day, probably by the third century A.D. and certainly by the fifth century A.D.[27] In these earlier centuries, Burma was parcelled into small kingdoms, and all that can be said is that, at certain capitals, there were strong centres of Buddhist influence.[28]

175 779* 177 It is, however, sufficient for our present purpose to be able to trace the dominating influence of Buddhism throughout the country from the eleventh century onwards. In this century, the turning point in Burmese story, the curtain of history lifts to reveal A-naw-ra-hta, the Burmese Constantine, moving southwards from his capital at Pagan to vanquish the king of Thaton and annex his dominion. According to the Burmese chroniclers, the motive for this advance was not mere lust of conquest but zeal for the true faith. King A-naw-ra-hta had been converted by a monk from the south, Shin Arahan of Thaton. But 'without the scriptures there can be no study, without study there can be no intuition.' To obtain these scriptures, the Pali scriptures, A-naw-ra-hta must needs subdue his rival at Thaton who possessed them.

000 What is of further importance for our present inquiry is the fact that

[26] Forbes, *British Burma and Its People*, chap. III, p. 55.

[27] Ray, op. cit. chap. I, pp. 83ff.

[28] *Ibid.*, chap. I, pp. 33ff., 81; cf. Taw Sein Kho, *Census of India Report* (Burma 1901), XII, 32.

30: Maung Htin Aung E-4 (no date) 1953 AP1 Burma
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671 molded the native customary laws in the other regions of
177 Southeast Asia, and the great Hindu Code of Manu, the hermit, the sage, the lawgiver, had gained enormous prestige and authority in Southeast Asia. The Burmese scholars and lawyers of the eleventh century studied the Code of Manu, but found
[545] little in it to interest them. The rigid caste system, which served as the basis of Hindu law as embodied in the Code of Manu, made no appeal to the Burmese with their classless society. The Burmese never had an aristocracy or a middle class. The king was above others, but others were all equal. There was no hereditary nobility, and the Burmese have always been so individualistic that family names or surnames have never existed with the Burmese. The officers of the king could be said to have formed a nobility, but if that was so, it was a nobility into which every Burmese could enter by talent and personality alone. The king, the chieftain, and the headman were originally elected. Thus the idea of dividing society into classes distinguished only by birth seemed strange to the Burmese.

671 Nonetheless, the prestige of the Code of Manu was so high
773 in Southeast Asia that the Burmese decided to make Manu their mythical law-giver. In Hindu mythology, Manu was a hermit, divinely inspired. In Burmese legend, Manu became a simple cowherd who was later elected king because of his mastery of customary law. The Burmese Manu also became a hermit later, but he became a hermit out of remorse because he once gave a wrong decision. This wrong judgment of the great Manu is well known in Burmese folklore as the case of the small cucumber. There was a cucumber plant growing in a man's garden, but as it was a creeper, it grew across the dividing hedge and bore fruit in the neighbor's garden. Now the man and the neighbor quarreled as to who was entitled to the small cucumber fruit, and they took their case before the great Manu, who decided in favor of the neighbor. But he soon reversed his decision, and feeling remorseful over his previous judgment, became a hermit. This clearly

illustrates that with the Burmese, Manu had become only an ordinary human being with the human trait of making mistakes, so very different from the divine hermit of Hindu lore.

By the thirteenth century, the customary law of the Burmese came to be collected and written down by jurists and scholars. Throughout the intervening centuries until the British conquest of the country, such collections of the law, and also collections of judicial precedents were made from time to time by scholars and jurists. But those collections were not codes, and were not fully binding on the judges. In all these collections, Manu was mentioned as the law-giver, and this lip-service paid to the prestige of the Hindu Code of Manu has misled modern scholars, especially European scholars of Burmese history and Burmese law, into thinking that the Burmese law was merely the Hindu Code of Manu modified and transplanted almost overnight in Burma of the eleventh century.

But in the eleventh century, the Burmese did become Buddhists almost overnight. The Burmese took to Buddhism with great enthusiasm, because the way of life preached by the Buddha seemed to be identical with their own democratic way of life. The Buddhistic revolt against the rigid caste system of the Hindu society could be appreciated by the Burmese, who called the Hindu half-playfully and half-seriously, "kula" or "caste people," and the Buddhistic emphasis on the equality of all men appealed to the Burmese with their classless society and their own emphasis on individual freedom. The jurists and the scholars waxed enthusiastic over Buddhism, and they gave a Buddhistic coloring and a Buddhistic background to their collections of Burmese customary law. This misled the early British administrators and judges in Burma into thinking that Burmese customary law was Buddhistic in origin, and gave to it the misleading official name of "Burmese Buddhist Law."

The impact of the English legal system introduced into

341 climate and the insect erosion.

341 The style of Pagan's stone architecture is still traceable in the form of the wood structures of the monasteries and the palaces of the 565 rulers of the last era of the Burmese Empire, especially in /204/ the characteristic door arches which terminate in horn-like points and the pyramidically rising storey roofs.

An enormous gulf sets this architecture apart from the ordinary Burmese dwelling. One cannot help marvel that a people who have such strong feeling for proportion and graceful flow of lines as to create these most magnificent buildings for its princes and monks, and covered them with a wealth of imaginative carvings, with gold and glittering glass mosaics, that such a people would live in mean, plain, wooden or bamboo huts with scanty house furnishings, even if they can afford something better.

[656] This glaring incongruity is first of all explained (2) by the Draconian rules of the old

2. About the general influence on the art of the dwellings cf. H. Schurtz, Urgeschichte der Kultur /Ancient Cultural History/ (Leipzig, 1900), pp. 418 ff.

Burmese class and luxury code. Brick buildings were definitely prohibited--they might have been used as fortifications during revolutions--and it had become second nature to the Burmese that lacquer work /Map--Distribution of House Types--Analyst. --Key: ....Pile dwelling._____ Ground level dwelling. .....Both types in use./ and gilding, carved door arches and storey roofs should be permitted only on the dwellings of princes and monks who are equal to the former in rank, with restrictions on the houses of other high dignitaries. Even now, after the British 341 rule gave a wider range of freedom to the subjects, following the deposition of the degenerated royal